

SAFFIR/SIMPSON HURRICANE SCALE

Category One

Winds 74-95 MPH

*Or Storm Surge Above 4-5 feet above normal.**

Category Two

Winds 96-110 MPH

*Or Storm surge 6 feet above normal.**

Category Three

Winds 111-130 MPH

*Or storm surge 9-12 feet above normal.**

Category Four

Winds 131-155 MPH

*Or storm surge 13-18 feet above normal.**

Category Five

Winds 155 MPH and greater

*Or storm surge greater than 18 feet above normal.**

**Actual storm surge values will vary considerably depending on coastal configurations and other factors.*

THE TERMS

WATCHES & WARNINGS

When a tropical storm or hurricane threatens, the National Hurricane Center will issue advisories based on the projected time until landfall of the storm.

Watches

A tropical storm or hurricane watch means that tropical storm or hurricane conditions pose a possible threat in a specified coastal region within 36 hours. You should begin preliminary preparations to protect life and property. Stay tuned to local news or the weather channel for continuing updates.

Warnings

A tropical storm or hurricane warning means that tropical storm or hurricane conditions are expected in a specified coastal region within 24 hours. All preparations should be completed. Stay tuned to local news or the weather channel for evacuation orders and additional instructions.

Remember – winds and storm surge from tropical storms are not as serious as a hurricane. However, many tropical storms and even tropical depressions may contain tornadoes and torrential, flooding rains.

STORMS DEFINED

- A tropical disturbance, tropical wave or easterly wave can be defined as a cluster of clouds and thunderstorms moving through the tropics.
- When the tropical wave develops a rotary, cyclonic (counter-clockwise) circulation with sustained (1 minute) winds to 38 mph, it is called a tropical depression.
- When sustained winds reach 39 mph, a tropical storm has formed.
- When sustained winds reach 74 mph, a hurricane has formed.